

Message Text

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ACTION COA-01

INFO OCT-01 ARA-06 ISO-00 AGR-05 INT-05 COME-00 EB-07

CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05

PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 DLOS-03 CG-00 DOTE-00

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R 031734Z MAR 75

FM AMEMBASSY QUITO

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4650

INFO AMCONSUL GUAYAQUIL

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EFIS EC

SUBJECT: GLUT OF FISH ON ECUADOREAN MARKET

REF: GUAYAQUIL 345

1. SOME OF THE CHICKENS ARE STARTING TO COME HOME TO ROOST. AMONG THE MORE INTRIGUING QUESTIONS RAISED BY THE CONFISCATION OF FISH BY THE GOE FROM AMERICAN VESSELS, WAS WHAT TO DO WITH IT ALL. OFF-LOADING THE FISH IN MANTA HAS MEANT FILLING LOCAL FREEZING CAPACITY, WITH OBVIOUS EFFECTS ON THE ECUADOREAN FISHING INDUSTRY. REFTEL DESCRIBES MEETING BETWEEN MANTA FISHERMEN AND DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR FISHERIES WILSON ARROYO ON FEBRUARY 26, WHEN LOCAL FISHERMEN COMPLAINED THAT CONFISCATED CATCH WAS TAKING UP ALL AVAILABLE STORAGE SPACE AND CAUSING MANTA MARKET PRICE TO DROP. AN EMBASSY OFFICER IN MANTA ON FEBRUARY 20TH WAS TOLD THAT ECUADOREAN BOATS WITHOUT REFRIGERATION FACILITIES HAD HAD TO DUMP THEIR CATCH OVERBOARD BECAUSE LOCAL FACILITIES WERE COMPLETELY PRE-OCCUPIED WITH CATCH FROM 4 US BOATS THEN OFF-LOADING IN PORT.

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2. EL COMERCIO OF MARCH 2 CARRIES INTRIGUING REPORT

FROM MANTA CLEARLY CONCOCTED TO HELP PEDDLE THE SEIZED FISH: "IN THE FISH FREEZING FACILITIES IN MANTA IS AN ENORMOUS ABUNDANCE OF SALTED AND DRIED TUNA WHICH HAS BEEN SEIZED FROM THE AMERICAN PIRATE SHIPS. THIS PROCESSING IS INEXPENSIVE, AND PERMITS THE GOVERNMENT TO OFFER THE FISH, A FOOD PRODUCT WITH GREAT NUTRITIOUS VALUE, TO THE PUBLIC AT LOW PRICES, PERMITTING ITS MASSIVE CONSUMPTION. THE GOVERNMENT IS MAKING THESE EFFORTS BECAUSE, DURING THIS PERIOD OF LENT (UNTIL HOLY WEEK) THERE IS ENOUGH TUNA FOR EVERYONE IN THE ENTIRE COUNTRY.

3. DURING THE PAST WEEK, A PERUVIAN REFRIGERATOR SHIP "THE MOCHICA" HAS BEEN LOADING A REPORTED 1200 TONS OF FROZEN TUNA, PURCHASED BY ARGENTINA. THERE HAVE BEEN SPECULATIVE REPORTS ABOUT FURTHER GOE SALES, BUT IT STILL SEEMS CLEAR THAT THE GOE HAS A LONG WAY TO GO BEFORE IT CAN DIVEST ITSELF OF A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE FISH THAT HAS BEEN CONFISCATED. BREWSTER

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Margaret P. Grafeld
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